

Notice of Exemption

To: Office of Planning and Research
PO Box 3044, 1400 Tenth Street, Rm 113
Sacramento, CA 95812-3044

From: California Department of Fish and Wildlife
Habitat Conservation Planning Branch
Native Plant Program
P.O. Box 944209
Sacramento, CA 94244-2090

Project Title: Molecular Profile and Ecological Analysis of *Arctostaphylos densiflora* Project (Project)

Project Location: The Project will take place at the California Native Plant Society's Vine Hill Preserve in western Sonoma County, California. Genetic analysis, soil sample analysis, and germination studies will take place at the Green Biome Institute research laboratory on the California State University East Bay Campus in Hayward, California.

Project Description: The California Department of Fish and Wildlife is issuing a permit to the Green Biome Institute, California State University East Bay (Permit No. 2081(a)-20-002-RP) pursuant to Fish and Game Code section 2081(a) for a project to sequence and annotate DNA of *Arctostaphylos densiflora*, a state-listed endangered plant, and conduct an ecological analysis of the species' habitat. Project activities include genetic sequencing, soil seedbank analysis, germination tests, and identification of seed predators. Five to ten flowers or one gram of material and a single leaf will be collected from each plant in the population and genomic DNA will be sequenced and assembled in the Green Biome Institute research laboratory. For soil seedbank analysis, a total of eight soil samples will be collected from beneath the canopy of different *Arctostaphylos densiflora* plants. The soil samples will be analyzed to determine the parent material and nutrient content and will be used for germination testing. Following analysis, any residual soils will be bagged and kept in dry storage at the Green Biome Institute. Germination testing will also be conducted from seeds collected from individual plants. Five to ten ripe fruits, each containing one to several seeds, will be collected from each plant in the population, and the seeds will be cold stratified and tested for germination in the Green Biome Institute research laboratory. Only half of the collected seed will be used for germination testing, and the remaining seed will be stored in the Green Biome Institute's sub-zero freezer for future testing if the initial germination study is unsuccessful. To identify seed predators of *Arctostaphylos densiflora*, two camera traps will be installed under the shrub canopy using small metal stakes, and data will be collected bi-weekly from August to October in 2020 or 2021.

California Public Agency Approving Project: California Department of Fish and Wildlife

Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: Dr. Christopher Baysdorfer, Director, Green Biome Institute

Exempt Status:

- Ministerial;
- Declared Emergency;
- Emergency Project;
- Categorical Exemption. Type and section number: Section 15306, Class 6

Reasons why project is exempt: The Project consists of basic data collection, research and resource evaluation activities and will not result in a serious disturbance to *Arctostaphylos densiflora* or any other environmental resource. The permit issued by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife for the Project includes measures to ensure that existing populations of *Arctostaphylos densiflora* are not impacted.

Lead Agency Contact Person: Cherilyn Burton

Area Code/Telephone/ Extension: (916) 376-8676

DocuSigned by:
Isabel Baer

Signature:

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Isabel Baer, Native Plant Program Manager

Date: 6/4/2020

Signed by Lead Agency

Date Received for filing at OPR: _____